SRC-10-06-94-M

SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting of Thursday, October 6, 1994
Room BC-110, 10:30

Present: E. Abouheif, B. Anderson, E.M. Besso, P. Bird, T. Bui (Chair), P. Dalton, U. de Brentani, D. Feldman, P. Lightbown, K. Lipke, E. Loo (recording secretary), D. Markiewicz, C. Suen

Regrets: A.B. Ibrahim, R. Storms

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED AND DISTRIBUTED TO SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

SRC-10-06-94-A	Agenda for the SRC Meeting of October 6, 1994
SRC-05-19-94-M	Minutes for the SRC Meeting of May 19, 1994
SRC-10-06-94-D1	Review Report of the Industrial Liaison Office
SRC-10-06-94-D2	Memo dated August 1, from Dr. P. Bird to Dr. C. Bertrand, re: Installation of equipment obtained via NSERC Grants.
SRC-10-06-94-D3	Release Communiqué from the Canadian Association of University Teachers, re: The Crisis at Concordia University
SRC-10-06-94-D4a	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the Centre for Pattern Recognition and Machine Intelligence (CENPARMI)
SRC-10-06-94-D4b	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the CONcordia Computer-Aided Vehicle Engineering (CONCAVE)
SRC-10-06-94-D4c	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the Centre for Research in Human Development (CRHD)
SRC-10-06-94-D4d	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the Centre for Building Studies (CBS)
SRC-10-06-94-D4e	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the Centre for Studies in Behavioral Neurobiology (CSBN)
SRC-10-06-94-D4f	Extract from the 5-year Progress Report of the Centre for Industrial Control (CIC)
SRC-10-06-94-D5a	Copy of Dr. T. Bui's response to Dr. E. Dickson, re: Science and Technology Review
SRC-10-06-94-D5b	Copy of CREPUQ document: Déclaration des universités du Québec à la Conférence régionale
SRC-10-06-94-D5c	Copy of NSERC Communications - Maintaining Canada's Research Base in the Current Funding Environment: NSERC Responds to Its Community
SRC-10-06-94-D5d	The role of the Social Sciences in a National Science and Technology Strategy prepared by the Social Science Federation of Canada (August 1994)

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED AND DISTRIBUTED TO SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

SRC-10-06-94-D6 University Support for Recognised Research Centres
SRC-05-19-94-D1 Discussion Paper: Long-Term Development Plan (May 1994)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m.

Chair welcome the members.

1. Approval of Agenda (SRC-10-06-94-A)

On motion by P. Bird and seconded by K. Lipke, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from the meeting of May 19, 1994.

The Minutes for the May 19 meeting were approved.

3. Business arising from Minutes

None

4. Report of the Chair

a) The federal government launched in July a review of Science & Technology in Canada. This is a major initiative and its outcome could affect future funding for university research. It was the government's intention to get the public and the community involved in the process as much as possible. There were 22 local meetings during the month of July and August and 5 regional meetings in September. Concordia has participated in the two previous meetings and will be participating to the national meeting which will be held in Ottawa in mid-October. Major agencies such as the AUCC, the Federation of Social Sciences of Canada, the Forum of Higher Education, CREPUQ, the National Committees of Deans of Science and of Applied Sciences and others have submitted briefs to the government. Except the Federation of Social Sciences which is concerned about the diminishing support for social sciences research, all the other submissions spoke more or less about the same thing: that is the important role of the universities in research and in training of highly qualified personnel. Copies of some of these submissions have been circulated to members of the Committee. The Declaration of CREPUQ regarding this matter was developed by the Comité de la recherche.

4. Report of the Chair

b) **The Report of the Expert Task Force on the Enhancement of Research Support Services and Facilities:** The Report was discussed at the last meeting of SCAPP, it was decided that the document will be sent to Senate for discussion and to Faculties for information. The document itself together with comments from the Senate will be an input to SCAPP for the academic priority, planning and budgeting process.

c) At the last two meetings of Comité de la recherche of CREPUQ, the issue of frais indirect was discussed. At the present time there are some research fundings which fall in the grey area between research contracts and research grants recognised by the Ministère as eligible for the 15% frais indirect. Since last year, McGill has been charging 15% on all research funds which are neither contracts nor research grants eligible for government's 15% frais indirect. The Comité de la recherche is discussing the possibility of adopting a common policy for all Québec universities on this matter.

E.M. Besso added that in most of the contracts that are negotiated through the University, overhead "frais indirect" is already charged, so most private sectors, partners are expected this is part of the budget. More often the government ministries such as the Ministry of Environment, Employment and Immigration Canada and others who entered an agreement with us via a centre or a group from the University, they do not agree to pay indirect cost. They would like to contribute an amount to a research project that is being done and because of these different ministries and other sources which are usually not industrial, we have traditionally in the past accepted these as grants to the University. We do not charge overhead but the province of Quebec does not recognise them as eligible participant to peer-reviewed research and thus the province of Quebec does not give us the 15% on the money we receive. We receive the money as grants, but they are not grants because there are other stipulations attached and we do not receive any kind of funds for the indirect cost that they engender.

5. Report of the Director, Office of Research Services

E.M. Besso reported the following:

- As has been the tradition in the past, she went to Ottawa in September and visited both NSERC and SSHRC. The main reason of her visit is to clarify any questions that the councils may have about Concordia and to improve and ensure that communication remains clear between the granting agencies and the University.

- On September 15, she visited FCAR, they focused in part on centres, that have recently been reviewed, improved the perception, the direction in which the programs are going. One of the main aspects that the program of FCAR is undergoing is the increasing number of applicants, the change in focus towards greater interdisciplinary and inter-institutional approach. ORS is attempting to put this information to the best use possible, encouraging discussions with centres applying for renewal, dealing with site visit reports and appraisals which indicate that some changes are expected.

5. Report of the Director, Office of Research Services

- A first draft of the Research brochures was produced by the freelance writer hired by Public Relations. After looking at it, they were in accord that the style is not what they would wish, a fair amount of revisions were made, both in style and contents. A new person will be hired and further information will be forthcoming.

- The Invention & Patent Committee resumed meetings in July. Concordia entered into agreement a few months ago with a US company, Research Corporation Technologies, to explore commercialisation Concordia developments. A first submission has been made to Research Corporation Technologies.

- The FRDP Task Force Committee met for the first time last week to define the difference between the elements recommended for internal funding and to recommend the share of resources that will be allocated to each element.

- The Contract Research Task Force has started its meetings two days ago to develop a new contract policy for the University. It will use the Policy already in place as starting point.

- Item related to centres - we are in the period when FCAR performs site-visits for centre applications and renewals, this will be going on within the next month.

6. Management of Research Funds - Update on J. Debonville's Activity

Chair remarked that after the release of the Financial Audit Report, NSERC decided to freeze the GRG which amounts approximately to $150,000 per year and FCAR decided to freeze the first instalment of grants for 1994-95. The agencies gave the University 60 days to put up a plan for the implementation of mechanisms to control expenditures of research grants. The University hired Ms. Jocelyne Debonville as Associate Vice-Rector, Finance to respond to the requests from the granting agencies. On September 15, which is the deadline date imposed by the two granting agencies, Concordia submitted a plan consisting of a number of items related to deficit, transfer of funds, opening and closing of accounts, signing authorities, etc. The following week the two granting agencies announced the release of the funds.

There are two committees, one led by L. Tansey to work on a project involving changes needed in the computer software systems and the other is a consultative committee consisting of researchers. The Chair will be meeting with Ms. Debonville next week.

7. Question Period

None.

8 a) Long-Term Development Plan (SRC-05-19-94-D1)

The Chair gave a brief description on the composition and the work of the Senior Management Team (SMT). The SMT has been meeting over the past year with the goal of establishing a cohesive and comprehensive multiple-year development plan for Concordia University. The SMT together with the Office of Institutional Planning and Research have developed a proposal for long-term development plan for the University and it is based on the outcome of many meetings. Chair noted that after the first round of consultation the document will be revised and sent forward for formal approval.

Some members of the Committee remarked that this is a very sensible document outlining the need of the long-term development plan. The idea of taking our mission statement and breaking it down to more specific areas is useful and interesting. There is a concern that graduate education is often considered as some kind of by-product of research efforts. There is a need to emphasize the importance of quality teaching in graduate programs and to ensure that our graduate programs are viable. According to the schedule, the implementation of the Long-term Development Plan will start in June 1995. While some members felt that the document is very worthy as the first step, we are still lacking details needed to define the direction that Concordia will be taking in the future.

Chair noted that this document is not the only document, at SCAPP there is a document on Priority, Planning and Budgeting Process. The latter document talks about priorities at the level of departments and faculties, how and when units should submit list of priorities and budget requests but it does not deal with the issue of planning. The long-term development plan sets stage for long-term planning.

It was remarked that we are way behind in terms of having a long-term planning, if we are going to do it, we must plan it well. The ground work, all the feedback, suggestions, consultations and information should be digested and synthesized by the SMT since it will have to implement the long-term development plan.

There was a concern about the time-frame. The individuals who will come in to the senior positions will have to carry out the implementation of the long-term development plan.

8 b) Review of the Research Centres 5-year Progress Report (SRC-10-06-94-D4a,b,c,d,e,f)

Following the 1989 Senate document 1989 the Chair asked seven recognised university centres to submit a five-year progress report. To date, CENSIPCOM did not respond to his request. The Chair remarked that from the review reports one can obtain information related to research directions, the number of graduate students, research grants and publications, etc. However, there are issues related to governance, rights and responsibilities, issue of finance support, issue of structure which are not addressed in those progress reports. The Chair is developing a document addressing these issues.

Members of the Committee suggested that a brief description of about 1 to 2 pages on the activities and achievements of the centres should be sent to Senate along with a set of recommendations on issues related to research centres at Concordia.

ACTION PLAN:

- **To ask Directors of Research Centres to submit a brief description of about one to two pages on the activities and achievements of their centre.**

P. Dalton asked about the review process.

Chair explained that it is a very simple process, each centre should on a periodical basis submit to SRC a progress report to bring the attention to this committee problems encountered with respect to any of the aspects of the Centre functions. The SRC would review the nature of the problems and make recommendations to Senate to resolve them. In the case of centres recognised by the government, such as FCAR, the process is that they have to submit to this committee a copy of their proposal to the outside agency.

8 c) Financial Support for Recognised Research Centres (SRC-10-06-94-D6)

Chair briefly reported that following examination of the financial support which Concordia University provides to recognized research Centres, he has decided to retain $40,000 from the CASA fund for this year for this purpose. The decision of keeping the $40,000 has nothing to do with the $40,000 coming from Advancement. The amount which will be available to the Faculties under the CASA program for this year is $350,000.

Chair noted that this will not support research projects, it will support infrastructure.

There was complete support from members of the Committee.

10 Varia - Space situation

P. Bird remarked that there is a serious space problem in the Faculty of Arts and Science, he is responsible for the assignment of space but he cannot do this any more because there is no space for him to assign. Recently he has been signing applications with a note stating that there is no office space any more. NSERC has a statement that the University has to guarantee to find space, he had to refuse to sign an application for Women Research Fellowship, because he cannot provide the 60 m^2 needed. This situation will get worse as faculty ages and new faculty members tend to require more space for labs.

11. Adjournment

It was moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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